Freight traffic

1941. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) in view of reduction in the export of iron ore and movement of food-grains, how his Ministry is planning to achieve freight traffic target set by it for the first half of this fiscal year;

(b) what is the target set in the first and second quarter of freight traffic this fiscal year;

(c) whether it is also a fact that loading of coal has increased only marginally during the first half of this financial year; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Despite some reduction in the loading of Iron Ore for Export and Foodgrains loading, there has been increase in the freight loading of other commodities *i.e.* Cement, Other goods, Petroleum Oil Lubricants (POL) etc. This resulted in an increase of 9.91% in the loading in April-September, 2006 as compared to April-September, 2005.

(b) Freight loading targets set in the first and second quarter of current fiscal year are 178.37 million tonnes and 176.70 million tonnes respectively.

(c) The loading of coal during the first half of current financial year was 9.34 million tonnes more than the loading achieved during the corresponding period of last year.

(d) Does not arise.

Changing the design of Mumbai suburban train coaches

1942. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to change the design of Mumbai suburban train coaches so that, it can withstand the impact of blasts;

(b) if so, the details thereof and when it is exprected to be implemented and what would be expected financial involvement;

(c) whether Government are considering for such design changes in other suburban trains in other metropolitan cities; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Indian Railways are not aware of any such design, used anywhere in the world, which can withstand the impact of blasts caused by explosives. However, such a concept would be impractical to implement. To minimize the casualties in collisions and fire accidents etc. a number of design inputs are feasible and are being progressively used in manufacture of different types of coaches.

Public-private partnership in Railways

†1943. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme to include Public-private partnership in the Railways in the Eleventh Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the sectors in which this partnership is likely to be implemented; and

(c) whether this would not encourage the privatization in the Railways and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) A number of areas/activities such as upgradation of stations at major metropolitan cities, establishment of super specialiy hospitals, setting up of manufacturing units for rolling stock, infrastructure projects for port connectivity through Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) and several activities in catering/tourism and hospitality area have been identified for possible execution through public-private partnership route.

(c) No, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.